

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3661
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, UN, ME
SUBJ: INITIAL REACTIONS AT THE UNITED NATIONS TO ISRAELI
ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY. WHILE UN DIPLOMATS IN GENERAL HAVE REACTED WITH CAUTION IN ANALYZING IMPLICATIONS OF ISRAELI ELECTIONS, PARTICULARLY SINCE COMPOSITION OF NEW GOVERNMENT COALITION IS UNCLEAR, FIRST RESPONSES WERE SURPRISE, DISFAVOR (ARABS), AND CONCERN ABOUT IMPACT ON NEGOTIATING PROSPECTS AND REGIONAL STABILITY. END SUMMARY.

2. IN INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS WITH WORKING LEVEL DIPLOMATS WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED REACTIONS TO ISRAELI ELECTION RESULTS QUITE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF GENERAL PUBLIC AS REPORT IN US PRESS. THE SYRIAN MISSION TOLD US THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO KNOW WHETHER LIKUD WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE SAME FOREIGN POLICY PLATFORM ADVOCATED AS AN OPPOSITION PARTY NOW
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THAT IT HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FORMULATING AND IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL POLICY. THE SYRIAN OBSERVED THAT JUDGING FROM LIKUD'S PUBLIC RECORD AND ITS LEADERSHIP ONE WOULD HAVE TO SAY LIKUD'S GAIN IN PARLIAMENTARY STRENGTH WAS NOT A HELPFUL SIGN WITH REGARD TO MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS. HE ADDED THAT BEGIN'S FIRST PRONOUNCEMENT ON BILATERAL CONTACTS WITH NEIGHBORING STATES WAS INDICATIVE OF LIKUD MENTALITY.

THIS IS AN IDEA WHICH HAS BEEN DISCARDED LONG AGO; PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS REVOLVE AROUND MULTILATERAL APPROACH OF GENEVA CONFERENCE.

3. LEBANESE DEPUTY PERM REP REACTED WITH COMPLETE SURPRISE AND COMMENTED THAT IN HIS VIEW THE LIKUD WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH ON REGIONAL PROBLEMS. HE OBSERVED THAT LIKUD IS BEHIND THE TIMES AND MOREOVER NO ONE WILL FORGET BEGIN'S TERRORIST BACKGROUND. EGYPTIAN MISOFF CHARACTERISTICALLY PREFERRED TO VIEW THE ELECTION RESULTS MORE CAUTIOUSLY. HE SPECULATED THAT A LIKUD-LED COALITION OR A NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT COULD BRING SURPRISES IN ISRAELI LEADERSHIP WHICH WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE UNFAVORABLE TO ARAB INTERESTS.

4. ISRAELI MISOFF IN EARLY CONJECTURE ON WHAT HAPPENED AT THE POLLS SUGGESTED ISRAELI ELECTORATE WAS ONLY REACTING TO DISAPPOINTMENT AND FRUSTRATION OVER LABOR'S INTERNAL PROBLEMS AND MANAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY FELT THE NATION NEEDED TOUGHER FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTION IN LIGHT OF CONTINUING HARDLINE PLO POSITIONS AND OF DOUBTS ABOUT MIDDLE EAST POLICY OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION.

5. EUROPEAN REACTION HAS BEEN SIMILAR TO THAT IN THE U.S. AN EXCEPTION WAS THAT OF THE FRENCH MISSION, WHERE WE WERE TOLD THAT, AS WITH DE GAULLE'S ROLE IN THE ALGERIAN CONFLICT, A CONSERVATIVE CHANGEOVER MIGHT CONCEIVABLY LEAD TO A BREAKTHROUGH.

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6. A SOVIET DIPLOMAT REMARKED THAT THE RESULTS SEEMED TO COMPLICATE THE NEGOTIATING SITUATION, ALTHOUGH IT WAS NECESSARY TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT IS FORMED BEFORE REACHING ANY FURTHER CONCLUSIONS.
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